

Application No. 09/932,430
Amendment dated October 5, 2004
Reply to Office Action of May 5, 2004

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendments to the claims and the following comments.

In the Office Action mailed May 5, 2004, claims 13-21, 23, and 30-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as allegedly obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,440,011 to Hocknell et al. ("Hocknell '011"), in view of a combination of U.S. Patent No. 6,162,133 to Peterson ("Peterson '133"), Japanese Publication No. 2001-029518 ("JP Pub. '518"), U.S. Patent No. 5,547,427 to Rigal et al. ("Rigal '427").

For economy of prosecution, Applicants have canceled independent claims 18 and 23, and dependent claims 20, 23, 34-35, and 37 by this Amendment. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections on the remaining claims, for the reasons set forth below.

Claims 13-17, 19, and 21

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected independent claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly as allegedly obvious over Hocknell '011 and in view of Peterson '133. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Amended independent claim 13 recites a "crown having a thickness of less than about 0.8 mm over at least a crown transition distance of about 20 mm measured rearward from the front opening" and a "sole having a thickness of less than about 1.0 mm over at least a sole transition distance of about 20 mm measured rearward from the front opening." The cited references, however, fail to teach or suggest all of the limitations of independent claim 13.

Hocknell '011 discloses a golf head having a body 44 including a hosel 54, face member 60, crown 62, and sole 64. The face member includes a striking plate 72 and a face extension 74 extending laterally inward from the perimeter of the striking plate 72. The face extension 74 includes an upper lateral extension 76 and a lower lateral extension 78. (Hocknell '011, col. 4, lines 1-20; Fig. 10.) The upper and lower lateral extensions 76, 78 each extend 0.2-1.0 inches (5.1-25.4 mm) from the perimeter 73 of the face plate 72 and engage the crown 62 and

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sole 64, respectively, along a substantially horizontal plane. (Hocknell '011, col. 4, lines 21-29 and 55-63.)

The Examiner cites to Hocknell '011 as disclosing a crown 62 and a sole 64, each having a thickness within the range recited in independent claim 13. Applicants, however, believe that the Examiner has misconstrued the disclosure in Hocknell '011 due to Hocknell '011's use of the terms "crown" and "sole." In Hocknell '011, the upper lateral extension 76 and lower lateral extension 78 are distinguished as separate components from the crown 62 and sole 64. Whereas, the transition distances recited in claim 13 of the present invention, as applied to Hocknell '011, include at least a portion of the upper and lower lateral extensions 76 and 78.

Hocknell '011 fails to disclose a thickness for either the upper or lower lateral extensions 76, 78. Because the recited transition distances in claim 13 include at least a portion of the upper and lower lateral extensions 76, 78, Hocknell '011 fails to disclose a golf club having a crown and sole, including the transition regions, with a thickness within the range recited in claim 13. Additionally, Peterson '133 fails to disclose a golf club head having a crown and sole with a thickness within the range recited in claim 13 and, thus, fails to remedy the deficiencies of claim 13. A *prima facie* case of obviousness requires that the cited references teach or suggest all the claim limitations of an invention. Because the cited references fail to teach or suggest all of the limitations of claim 13, the § 103(a) rejection of claim 13 is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 14-17, 19, and 21 depend from independent claim 13 and should be allowable for the same reasons claim 13 is allowable.

Claims 30-33, 36, and 38

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected independent claim 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly as allegedly obvious over Hocknell '011 and in view of Peterson '133. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 30 recites a method of manufacturing a golf club head comprising a "crown having a thickness of less than 0.8 mm over at least a crown transition

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distance of about 20 mm measured rearwardly from the front opening." As discussed above with respect to independent claim 13, Hocknell '011 fails to disclose a golf club having a crown, including the transition regions, with a thickness within the range recited in claim 13. And, Peterson '133 fails to remedy the deficiencies of Hocknell '011. Because the cited references fail to teach or suggest all of the limitations of claim 30, the § 103(a) rejection of claim 30 is improper and should be withdrawn. Additionally, claims 31-33, 36, and 38 depend from independent claim 30 and should be allowable for the same reasons claim 30 is allowable.

New Claims 39-54

Applicants have added new independent claims 39, 54 and new dependent claims 40-53. Independent claim 39 recites a method of manufacturing a golf club head comprising a "crown having a thickness of less than about 0.8 mm over at least a crown transition distance of about 20 mm measured rearward from the front opening." Independent claim 54 recites a golf club head comprising a "sole having a thickness of less than about 1.0 mm over at least a sole transition distance of about 20 mm measured rearward from the front opening." No new matter has been added.

As discussed above with respect to claim 13, the cited references fail to disclose or suggest a golf club heading having a crown and/or sole, including the transition regions, with a thickness within the range recited in claim 13. Because the cited references fail to teach or suggest all of the limitations of claims 39 and 54, the § 103(a) rejection of claims 39 and 54 is improper and should be withdrawn. Additionally, claims 40-53 depend from independent claim 39 and should be allowable for the same reasons claim 39 is allowable.

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CONCLUSION

The foregoing amendments and remarks should place this application in condition for allowance. If any matters remain outstanding after consideration of this Amendment that the Examiner believes might be expedited by a telephone conference with Applicants' representative, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

Date: October 5, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

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